

Glossary of Terms in the Modified UNESCO Classification Scheme (MUC)

This glossary provides definitions, decision criteria, and examples of all the land cover types outlined in the Modified UNESCO Classification Scheme (MUC). It should be used as the primary reference to determine what land cover classes to report in the Land Cover Module Protocols.

The glossary contains four columns of information:

1. The MUC classification code (used to report land cover types in the Land Cover and Accuracy Assessment Protocols)
2. The name of the land cover class
3. The MUC class level
4. The definitions, decision criteria, and examples

MUC Code	Name of Land Cover Class	MUC level	Definitions, Decision Criteria, and Examples
0	Closed Forest	level 1	Formed by trees at least 5 meters tall with their crowns interlocking. Total canopy cover is greater than 40%.
01	Mainly Evergreen Forest	level 2	The canopy is never without green foliage . . .
011	Tropical Wet Forest	level 3	Often called a tropical rain forest. Consisting mainly of broad-leaved evergreen trees . . .
0111	Lowland Forest	level 4	Consists of fast growing trees, many exceeding 50 meters tall and usually forming an uneven canopy . . .

The land cover types are organized numerically in the same order as the classes appear in the MUC Classification Scheme. Miscellaneous terms used in the glossary are defined following the numbered MUC definitions.

Be sure to note the difference between determining the percentage ground coverage (the entire area which is under the canopy or foliage of the vegetation) and the percentage species composition. The overall canopy or ground coverage determines the dominant level 1 land cover type for the specific area on the satellite image. The percent species composition of the dominant cover type (from level 1) determines which level 2 land cover classification is appropriate. Levels 3 and 4 are more specific descriptions of plant communities and may be determined by either ground coverage or percent species composition as defined in the glossary.

For an example, see the following heading in the *miscellaneous terms* section of the glossary: Classification using MUC, % Cover vs. % Species Composition

References: *A land use and land cover classification system for use with remote sensor data.* J.R. Anderson, E.E. Hardy, J.T. Roach, and R.E. Witmer. U.S. Geol. Survey. Prof. Pap., 1976.

Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States. L.M. Cowardin, V. Carter, F.C. Golet, and E.T. LaRoe. U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Services. FWS/OBS-79/31, 1979.

International Classification and Mapping of Vegetation. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Switzerland: UNESCO, 1973.

NOAA Coastal Change Analysis Program (C-CAP): Guidance for Regional Implementation. J.E. Dobson et al. NOAA Technical Report NMFS 123, 1995.